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SOURCE Democratie NouvelleINDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, ETHNIC MINORITIES IN BULGARIA

[Comment: The following was extracted from an article appearing
in the November 1953 issue of Democratie Nouvelle, a French Communist
monthly magazine. The article was written by Marius Magnien, after
traveling in Bulgaria.]

Bulgarian Industrial Development

The increase and expansion of factories is the most striking phenomenon of
the new Bulgaria. Prior to the establishment of the People's Republic, there
had been almost no industry in the country, except for the perfume industry in
the Kazanluk region, the tobacco industry in the Rhodope Mountains, and the coal
mines at Dimitrovo. But now there are textile mills, and the new industrial
city of Dimitrovgrad, with its "Stalin" Chemical Combine. Deposits of iron and
other ores have been discovered, and soon Bulgaria will produce its own iron
and steel.

At the new "Lenin" [State Metallurgical] Plant under construction 25 kilo-
meters from Sofia, one open-hearth furnace is already in operation. This year,
construction will be started on the first blast furnace to treat Bulgarian iron
ore, using coke which will be made by the first Bulgarian coke ovens. The coke
plant will be built to treat the coal mined at Dimitrovo, 6 kilometers away.

Operation of the new metallurgical plant will be completely automatic. The
glass-walled rooms from which the workers will control casting and rolling oper-
ations will be air-conditioned. Seventy percent of the plant's personnel will
be women. The directors of this metallurgical combine are all very young: the
director is 25, the head of the rolling department 20, and the chief engineer
23 years old.

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Turkish Minority in Bulgaria

The ethnic minorities of the Bulgarian population include the Macedonians in the southwest, the Turks in the northeast, the Jews (a very small minority), the gypsies (150,000, largely still nomadic), and the Armenians (5,000). The Turkish minority numbers 550,000, out of a total Bulgarian population of 7 million. It is concentrated largely in the okrugs of Stalin, Ruse, Kolarovgrad, Khaskovo, and Burgas.

The great majority of the Turks are farmers. Their ancient customs have largely persisted, their cultural level is still low, and they are in poor circumstances economically. The Moslem religion has preserved a certain amount of chauvinism within the Turkish minority.

As of 1953, the illiteracy of the Turkish minority is believed to have been wiped out, by means of evening courses conducted by school teachers in each village. There are weekly newspapers in the Turkish language in each of the five principal Turkish centers.

In the economic field, the Ministry of Agriculture is organizing model farms to stimulate cooperative work. The Ministry of Heavy Industry is establishing industrial promotion centers in those regions having a dense Turkish population in order to develop a Turkish labor class. In the Rhodope region, there is a factory where 80 percent of the workers are Turks.

In the field of health, the government has opened a large number of maternity hospitals, nurseries, and general hospitals. There are four Turkish doctors (all women) and 12 Turkish students in the School of Medicine. In the School of Agronomy there are ten Turkish students, and in the Polytechnical School there are 13. A Turkish architect was graduated in 1952.

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